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The Monitor

Recess In Schools Task Force

October 19, 2011

Dear PTA Advocate,

Recess in Schools—is it frivolous play time or is it a support for student success? The debate has continued for quite a few years. Many schools have eliminated recess altogether, while others have scaled back on recess. Illinois Senator Kimberly Lightford has asked why, and the Illinois General Assembly has agreed to examine the question of recess by enacting legislation that establishes a Recess In Schools Task Force.

Representatives to the Task Force include members of the Illinois General Assembly, school principals, health care professionals, teachers and parents. The Task Force is charged with identifying barriers to recess and recommending strategies to successful implementation of recess programs in a final report due to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2011.

As the Illinois PTA representative to the Recess in Schools Task Force, I will be able to share your concerns with the members, and offer your suggestions. You can help by answering the following questions:

- Is there recess in the school your child attends?
 - Identify the area of Illinois you live in: rural, suburban or urban
 - Identify the grade levels of the school your child attends
 - Indicate when during the day recess is held, and how many minutes it lasts
- If there is no recess in the school your child attends, make an appointment with the administrator to ask why then provide me that information—this could be a simple list of reasons such as time constraints, safety concerns.
- If there is recess in the school your child attends, is it structured in any way or free “play” time?
- If there is recess in the school your child attends, how is it supervised?

The next meeting of the Task Force will be November 3, 2011. Please provide me any information you gather by November 1 so that I can share it with the other members. You can send your information via e-mail with a subject line RECESS to: bquinnpta@aol.com.

I look forward to being *your* voice on the Recess In Schools Task Force.

Barb Quinn,
Legislative Advocacy Director